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DOC	4	REV DATE	30 Apr 80	BY	025251
ORIG COMP	31	OPI	31	TYPE	02
ORIG CLASS	C	PAGES	4	REV CLASS	C
JUST	22	NEXT REV	2010	AUTH	HR 10-2

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Security

SUBJECT : Answering Procedures for Agency  
Telephone Operators

1. In accordance with your request of 7 June 1961, this office has examined the answering procedures used by Agency telephone operators, the reasons behind such procedures, and the problem involved in any change from the present system.

2. In connection with this matter Mr. [REDACTED] Space Maintenance & Facilities Branch/RE&CD/OL, was contacted and questioned regarding the present answering procedures followed by the Agency operators. These procedures as stated by Mr. [REDACTED] are noted below:

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a. Incoming trunk calls on EXecutive 3-6115 are answered as "EXecutive 3-6115."

(1) Should the caller ask if this number is for CIA, the operator answers, "Yes."

(2) If the caller asks what the name of the department is, the operator answers that it is a [REDACTED]. If pressed further, the operator will identify the number as CIA.

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b. Incoming calls from other Government departments or agencies on Code 163 are answered as "Central Intelligence Agency."

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3. Mr. [REDACTED] advised that these procedures were established by memorandum from the Office of Security. A search of the files of the Survey Branch produced a copy of this memorandum dated 13 March 1951.

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4. During the discussion with Mr. [REDACTED] the problem was raised of changing the answering procedures of incoming trunk calls on EXecutive 3-6115 to "Central Intelligence Agency." Mr. [REDACTED] noted that he would be in favor of such a change in that under the present procedures considerable time is lost by the operators in repeating EXecutive 3-6115 to persons not accustomed to such an answer or in handling calls from persons who inquire as to the identity of the Agency being called.

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5. With regard to plans for Agency operator answering procedures in the new building, Mr. [REDACTED] advised that:

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a. Incoming trunk calls will be answered with the new number, "351-1100."

b. Interdepartmental calls on the new code number (143) will be answered as "Central Intelligence Agency."

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6. With the new direct dial equipment being installed in the new building, it will be possible for a large percentage of the calls now handled by the Agency operators to be handled by automatic equipment. Under the new system a person knowing an Agency employee's extension will be able to contact [REDACTED] by dialing 351 and then dialing the extension without going through the Agency switchboard. The operator would handle only those calls where the caller either does not know the employee's extension or is contacting the Agency and requesting referral to an office concerned with his specific problem, i.e., credit, police, personnel. This would partially alleviate the problem raised by Mr. [REDACTED] in paragraph four above.

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7. On 9 June 1961, a representative of the Survey Branch met with Mr. [REDACTED] SSA/DD/S, and discussed with him the present Agency telephone answering procedures and whether or not the DD/P would object to a change to answering outside trunk calls as "Central Intelligence Agency." Mr. [REDACTED], after discussing

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this problem with various DD/P officials, advised that no serious objection had been raised to changing the system. He noted, however, that several persons, including himself, felt that a change to answering EXecutive 3-6115 as "Central Intelligence Agency" might unnecessarily identify overt Agency personnel, who, for emergency or other purposes, give the EXecutive 3-6115 number to relatives or friends that are not witting of the employee's association with the Agency.

8. In considering the various aspects of answering the telephone as "Central Intelligence Agency," there are two major factors to consider. One involves an unnecessary disclosure by overt Agency employees. The other involves certain considerations pertaining to covert employees of the Agency.

a. Unnecessary Disclosure by Overt Employees: In many instances overt Agency employees may give the Agency telephone number and their personal extension to a variety of outside people, such as, service personnel for automobiles and appliances, insurance salesmen, real estate brokers, personal friends, etc. In these relationships, there may be no necessity for actually disclosing Agency connection or employment. However, a telephone call to the Agency number would immediately disclose this connection.

The above situation would be contrary to the individual obligations imposed on Agency employees by [REDACTED] entitled "Disclosure of Agency Affiliation." This regulation states that indiscriminate or gratuitous admissions of Agency employment shall not be made when not necessary or where a general statement of employment would suffice.

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b. Covert Employees: There may arise circumstances where an Agency employee under official cover is in a situation where he must make a telephone call to Headquarters, either from someone's office, a hotel room, or other place where the call goes through a switchboard. The telephone operator's reply of "Central Intelligence Agency" would place the individual's cover in a compromising position as well as the business he was transacting.

9. In view of the above considerations, it is recommended that the present answering procedures, with one exception, remain as they are until the Agency moves into its new Headquarters Building.

The one exception is to eliminate the procedure of the telephone operator indicating that this is a [REDACTED] and only admitting that it is CIA when pressed further by the inquirer. This makes the Agency look ridiculous to outsiders and serves no useful purpose. Since the Agency number is openly listed in the telephone directory, there should be no hesitation in acknowledging that EXecutive 3-6115 is the Central Intelligence Agency. Elimination of this latter procedure would also minimize the objection raised by the Telephone Section as to wasted man-hours in dodging the issue as to whose number is EXecutive 3-6115.

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10. Upon moving to the new Headquarters site and upon implementation of the new direct dial system, the security considerations raised in paragraph seven relating to unnecessary disclosures and problems of covert employees would be eliminated. An outside call placed to an individual in the Agency will go directly to the individual's office without going through the operator.

Therefore, it is recommended that upon transfer to the automatic dial system, this Office interpose no security objection to a change by Agency telephone operators answering incoming calls as "Central Intelligence Agency," should officials of the Agency deem that such a change further facilitates the over-all operation and administration of the Agency.

[REDACTED]

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Acting Chief, Physical Security Division, CS